Conſiderations on the Trade of Africa, *Humbly Offer'd to the Moſt Honourable Houſe of* LORDS, *in behalf of the Bill now before them.*

THE Trade to *Africa* is allowed to be of Conſequence ſufficient to deſerve an Extraordinary Care. The preſent Queſtion is not whether it ſhould be Preſerved or not, but how it may be moſt Advantageous to *England*, and the Colonies.

The Trade of Conſequence.

To manage the Trade in a Company without a Stock ſeems both improper and impracticable, on many Accounts; in particular, on Account of the Charge of Forts, Caſtles, and Treaties with the Petty Kings of the Country, which is very Chargeable, and alwayes requiring Secreſie and Expedition; and alſo to prevent the Deſigns of other *Europeans*, who have Forts and Caſtles on the ſame Coaſt: And if they could poſſeſs themſelves of our Forts and Caſtles, would ſoon become Maſters of the whole Trade, and exclude us.

Company Without a Stock impracticable.

And it is remarkable, That where Forts and Caſtles are neceſſary for the Preſervation of the Trade, no Nation whatſoever have a Company without a Joynt-Stock.

All Nations ſupport Forts and Caſtles by a Joynt-Stock.

The Caſe of the *Levant Company* is otherwiſe: They need no Forts and Caſtles, being under Protection of a Government willing to Treat with, and able to Defend them.

So that were it not for the Forts and Caſtles, which only an Incorporated Company, Trading upon a Joynt-Stock, can maintain, Foreigners inſtead of leaving us any ſhare in that Trade, would ingroſs the whole. Nor is it to be ſuppoſed, that Private Perſons can, upon their Narrow and Uncertain Funds, contend againſt the Power and Craft of thoſe other *European* Nations who manage their Traffick thither by a Joynt-Stock, *viz. French*, *Dutch*, *Danes*, *Hamburghers*, &c.

But a Company, with a Stock, to manage the Trade, allowing all Perſons the Freedom of Trade, on certain Limitations and Conditions which may put them and the Company upon equal Charge in Trade, ſeems the moſt Reaſonable and Eaſie Way, both to Promote and Preſerve the Trade it ſelf in General, and the true Intereſt of the Colonies and Private Traders in Particular. For,

A Company Regulated with a Joynt-Stock moſt beneficial.

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1. By this Means the Forts and Caſtles, which defend the Trade, will more certainly be Maintained, for the Company will be bound to that, to ſecure their own Goods and Treaſure.

2. The Colonies will be certainly bettered by it; for the ſupply of Negroes will be more certain, and in greater Numbers: Nor can they be impoſed upon in Price, becauſe they, and all other Perſons, may fetch them, if they think fit.

3. If a Trade is carried on by a Company without a Stock, every Man is at Liberty whether he will Trade or no: And if the Publick Affairs ſhould make it very Hazardous or Unprofitable, they will decline Trade, and then the Forts and Caſtles muſt conſequently be loſt. For if few Ships ſhould be ſent thither, too little would be raiſed to uphold the Forts and Caſtles, which muſt alwayes be ſupplyed with Men, Proviſion, Stores and Ammunition from *England*: Whereas a Company, with a Stock, muſt Trade to imploy their Stock in War as well as Peace, and maintain the Forts and Caſtles for the Security of their Trade and Effects in the moſt dangerous Times, at the greateſt Expence, as the preſent *African Company* have done in the late War.

4. A Company with a Stock, with Liberty for others to Trade on Equal Charge, hath many Advantages to the Publick, by increaſing Trade, and by making room for Gentlemen, Widows, Orphans, or any Perſons out of Trade, to imploy their Moneys, and will give the Private Traders opportunity to improve their Stock and Induſtry, to the Advantage of themſelves in particular, and the Nation in general.

Preſent Company may deſerve the Eſtabliſhment by this Bill propoſed.

Since then the preſent Bill gives Liberty to all His Majeſties Subjects to Trade at a like Charge, the Preſent Company ſeems to deſerve at leaſt this Method of Settlement in the Bill preſcribed, who have for Twenty Six Years paſt maintained the Trade, and preſerved the Forts and Caſtles at their own Charge, and have bought and built the Forts and Caſtles they now poſſeſs, have as a Company paid Eleven Thouſand Five Hundred Thirty Pound Eight Shillings Taxes during this War, have ſunk their Original Stock to maintain the ſaid Forts to ſupport the Trade, and have never divided above 3 *per Cent. Communibus annis*, and have during this War loſt above Two Hundred Thouſand Pounds *Sterling* in indeavouring to carry on this Trade, and notwithſtanding the ſcarcity of Money, and the ſaid great Loſſes, in the Year 1693 raiſed the further Sum of Seventy Two Thouſand Three Hundred and Forty Pounds for the preſerving the ſaid Forts, Caſtles, and Trade, whilſt ſome who oppoſe Settling the Trade have Enjoyed it without any Charge; And ſince the Peace have raiſed the further Sum of Fifty Seven Thouſand Ninety Six Pounds for the carrying on the ſaid Trade. By which 'tis humbly conceived they have given a very good Aſſurance, that under ſuch a Company the Trade can never be loſt, but the Forts and Caſtles will be ſupplied in the moſt dangerous Times.

And yet by this Bill all Perſons may Trade, and their Factors and their Effects, be equally protected paying but an equal proportion for the ſupport of thoſe Forts and Protection of the Common Trade.

The Company is by this Bill alſo oblig'd to give a true Account upon Oath of all Moneys Received and Paid on the Account of the ſaid Charge, and to admit any Perſon on behalf of the Private Traders to inſpect at all times the Accounts of their own Export, and of Moneys laid out for the Maintenance of the ſaid Forts and Caſtles. The Company to Account for what they Receive and Pay.

All which is humbly ſubmitted to the Conſideration of this Moſt Honourable Houſe.

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Considerations on the Trade of Africa, *Humbly Offer'd to the Most Honourable House of* Lords, *in behalf of the Bill now before them.*